UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

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26 February 1996

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General condemns "brutal acts of terrorism" in Jerusalem and Ashkelon; Security Council Members call on parties to continue supporting Middle East peace process.

* Secretary-General tells Special Committee on Inalienable Rights of Palestinian People that acts of violence in past year clearly intended to derail peace process.

* Member States owe United Nations $3.2 billion as of 15 February; $1.3 billion owed to regular budget, $1.9 billion to peace-keeping and $11.6 million to International Tribunals.

* Second round of inter-Tajik talks end without extending cease-fire.

* Commission on Population and Development meets at UN Headquarters; to focus on reproductive rights.

* Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy concludes two week session; proposes UN conference on energy for twenty-first century.

* Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination to examine measures by countries to combat racism.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has condemned, in the strongest possible terms, the attacks on buses in Jerusalem and Ashkelon, Israel yesterday, according to a United Nations spokesman. The Secretary-General said he was shocked and appalled at the "brutal acts of terrorism" and "this new attack on the peace process for which we have all worked so long and so hard". He called on men and women of good will not to allow the terrorists to derail the precious gains achieved by the Palestinian and Israeli people already at great cost.

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Meanwhile, Security Council President Madeleine Albright (United States) told correspondents that Council Members condemned all acts of terrorism, including the attacks on buses in Jerusalem and Ashkelon and extended their deepest sympathies to the Government and people of Israel and especially to the families of the victims. She said Council Members reaffirmed their strong support for the Middle East peace process and called on the parties to spare no effort in supporting, consolidating and advancing that process.

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Despite some setbacks, the vision inherent in the Declaration of Principles signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1993 had been sustained, the Secretary-General said today. He told the Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People that both parties had demonstrated their commitment to the principles and provisions of the Agreement and their determination to implement it. Both had also accepted negotiation as the means to resolve immediate and long-term political differences.

However, the security situation was a cause for concern and acts of violence over the past year had clearly been intended to derail the peace process, the Secretary-General continued. Referring to the terrorist bombing in Jerusalem and Ashkelon yesterday, he asked how many more innocent people must die before there was peace and in the region. Stressing that extremism from any quarter must be curbed, he said the most effective way to do that was to ensure negotiations continued and the benefits from achievements already reached were apparent and accessible.

It was essential to address economic instability and improve poor living conditions especially in the Gaza Strip, he continued. The United Nations was contributing to the economic and social development on which an effective transition to Palestinian self-rule must be based. That, in turn, would assure a foundation for lasting peace. UN programmes and agencies were facilitating the development of public works projects to create immediate employment opportunities and bring visible change to the Gaza Strip. A coordination mechanism had been established to ensure effective disbursement of donor funds and Palestinian police were receiving training and assistance. There had been improvements, particularly in institution-building and infrastructure, he added.

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As of 15 February, Member States owed the United Nations a total of $3.2 billion, according to the latest update on the Organization's financial situation. Of that amount, $1.3 billion was for assessments to the regular budget and $1.9 billion for peace-keeping operations. An additional $11.6 million was owed for the International Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Included in the figures for peace-keeping and the Tribunals are assessments within the 30-day due period.

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The Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, Sergey V. Lavrov, met with the Secretary-General today and reiterated his Government's support for the inter-Tajik negotiating process. According to a United Nations spokesman, the second round of inter-Tajik talks ended without extending the cease-fire agreement.

Meanwhile, the co-chairman of the joint commission for the implementation of the Tajikistan cease-fire agreement, Zafar Rakhmonov, was kidnapped in Dushanbe on Friday, according to the Tajikistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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The Commission on Population and Development, which began a five-day session at United Nations Headquarters today, will focus on reproductive rights and health, including family planning, maternal and child health, abortion and information on sexuality. Many issues, such as the reproductive health rights of adolescents and the role of men in fertility regulation, have only recently attracted international attention. The Commission will study reports on initiatives by Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on those issues, as well as challenges to promoting reproductive rights and enhancing reproductive health.

Adolescent reproductive behaviour has become a world-wide concern, according to reports before the Commission. Mainly because of the sensitivity of the subject, most countries do not have coherent policies to protect adolescent reproductive health, even though young people have a special need for information on sexual and reproductive health. Information on sexuality, pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, combined with information about local services and counselling is an effective way of assisting young people.

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The Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development has proposed that a United Nations conference on energy for the twenty-first century be held in the year 2001. The Committee, which concluded its two-week session on Friday, approved a draft resolution on the conference, which would try and mobilize world opinion on energy for sustainable development. According to the terms of the draft, the Economic and Social Council would ask the Secretary-General to examine the feasibility of such a conference and report to the General Assembly during its fifty-second session in 1997.

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The Committee also approved a draft decision by which the Economic and Social Council would urge international financial organizations to dedicate a larger portion of their funds to research and development for energy efficiency and renewable energy. The funding should facilitate the commercialization of renewable energy and achieve a more sustainable mix in national energy consumption.

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Measures to combat racial discrimination by 9 countries will be examined by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which will meet from 26 February to 15 March in Geneva. The countries are Zimbabwe, Russian Federation, Colombia, Denmark, United Kingdom, Finland, Hungary, Spain and Venezuela. The 18-member Committee is the first body created by the United Nations to review actions by States in fulfilling their obligations under a specific human rights agreement, in this case, the 1969 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. It examines reports submitted periodically by States parties to the Convention.

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UNITED NATIONS

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27 February 1996

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* In Presidential statement, Security Council deplores downing of civil aircraft by Cuban air force; asks International Civil Aviation Organization to investigate.

* Cuba tells Council downed planes were in its airspace and pilot ignored warnings; says group behind flights is waging campaign to subvert Cuba's constitutional order.

* United States calls action against aircraft a crime; says there was time for legal action rather than use of air-to-air missiles; Cuba will call for General Assembly session to present its case.

* Security Council suspends sanctions against Bosnian Serbs.

* Secretary-General urges Cameroon and Nigeria to settle dispute over Bakassi Peninsula peacefully; Security Council Members call on parties to observe a cease-fire and withdraw forces.

* Secretary-General begins official visit to Brazil.

* Next round of talks between the United Nations and Iraq on the "food for oil formula" will begin on 11 March.

* Extra polling day scheduled in Sierra Leone to cope with heavy voter turnout in country's legislative and national elections.

* UN sanctions should not be used as primary means to settle disputes between States, China tells Committee on Charter.

* WHO says quick response by Gabon and international medical team contains spread of Ebola virus.

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The Security Council has strongly deplored the shooting down of two civil aircraft by the Cuban air force on 24 February, apparently resulting in the deaths of four people. In a statement read out by its President, Madeleine Albright (United States), early this morning, the Council asked the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to investigate the entire incident. It called on the United States and Cuban Governments to cooperate with the investigation.

The Council recalled that, according to international law, as reflected in Article 3 bis of the International Convention on Civil Aviation of 7 December 1944 added by the Montreal Protocol of 10 May 1984, States must refrain from the use of weapons against civil aircraft in flight and must not endanger the lives of persons on board and the safety of aircraft. It asked the ICAO to report its findings to the Council as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, according to a United Nations spokesman, the ICAO's governing council would meet in Montreal, Canada, on March 6 to discuss the issue.

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Cuba told the Security Council this morning that the pilot of one of the planes shot down over Cuban airspace had ignored warnings. The Permanent Representative of Cuba, Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla, said his Government had irrefutable proof that two aircraft were in Cuban airspace when they were downed. Earlier in the day, other planes originating from the United States had also violated his country's airspace. The group behind the flights, "Brothers to the Rescue", was engaged in a campaign aimed at subverting Cuba's constitutional order and such organizations acted with impunity under the protection of the United States Government.

Mr. Rodriguez said his country's territorial waters and airspace had been violated many times by organizations based in the United States. Cuba had indicated the dangers of unauthorized flights into its airspace on a number of occasions, however, the United States had failed to prevent the flights. Acting under a civilian cloak, the organizations had undertaken terrorist acts. He reminded the Council that States parties to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, had agreed not to use civil aviation for incompatible purposes and to take appropriate measures to prevent the use of civil aviation in its territory for such purposes.

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Transcripts of conversations between the pilots of Cuban air force MIGs and their ground controller, showed there was plenty of time for legal action against the two civilian Cessna aircraft, according to the Permanent Representative of the United States, Madeleine Albright. Referring to the transcripts supplied by

her Government, Ambassador Albright told correspondents this afternoon that the Cuban pilots could have warned the Cessnas they were in dangerous territory by using voice-to-voice contact, dipping their plane's wings or escorting them out of the area, instead of using air-to-air missiles to "take them out".

Ambassador Albright said Cuban assertions that the two private Cessna aircraft posed a threat to its territory were ridiculous. The MIG pilots knew the planes were small Cessnas, piloted by civilians and were no threat at the time. She described the Security Council statement as strong and said it showed that the international community considered the Cuban action was a crime and that shooting unarmed aircraft out of the skies was an act to be condemned and deplored.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Minister of Cuba, Roberto Robaina, speaking to correspondents after his arrival in New York, said his Government would call for a reconvened session of the General Assembly to explain his country's position. The Security Council had know he was arriving today, yet had not waited before meeting on the issue. Cuba had evidence of how patient its air force pilots had been and how many warnings they had given, he said.

* * *

The Security Council today suspended sanctions against the Bosnian Serbs. Council President Madeleine Albright told correspondents the decision followed confirmation by the Commander of the Implementation Forces (IFOR) Admiral Leighton Smith, that the Bosnian Serbs had complied with the zones of separation agreement as provided for in the Dayton Peace Accord.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has urged Nigeria and Cameroon to settle their dispute over the Bakassi Peninsula peacefully and in accordance with the United Nations Charter. According to a United Nations spokesman, the Secretary-General met separately yesterday, with the Permanent Representatives of both countries and expressed serious concerns over the deteriorating situation in the Peninsula. He noted that the dispute is currently being considered by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and appealed to the two Governments to abstain from any action which might increase tension between them.

Meanwhile, Council President Madeleine Albright told the press that Council Members had called on Nigeria and Cameroon to observe a cease-fire and withdraw their forces to the positions occupied before the case was brought before the ICJ. They regretted the loss of life and recalled the United Nations Charter prohibition against the use of force. Ambassador Albright said Council Members had taken note of various bilateral and regional efforts to resolve the conflict.

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The Secretary-General was in Brazil today on the first leg of an official trip which will also take him to Mexico. While in Brazil, the Secretary-General will hold meetings with President Fernando Henrique Cardoso and senior Government officials as well as with other dignitaries in Sao Paulo and Brasilia. The Secretary-General will go to the Brazilian Congress to meet with the Presidents of the Senate and the House of Representatives. He will also meet with the President of the Brazilian Supreme Court.

The Secretary-General is expected to attend the signing ceremony for a new project which will help coordinate an ambitious $250 million pilot programme to preserve tropical wilderness areas in Brazil. The $6 million project will receive support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the European Union.

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The next round of talks between the United Nations and Iraq regarding the so-called "oil for food formula" will begin on 11 March, a United Nations spokesman said today. The discussions are on the implementation of Security Council resolution 986 (1995), which permits Iraq to sell a limited amount of oil -- up to $2 billion over six months -- in exchange for badly needed food and medicine.

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An extra day of polling has been scheduled in Sierra Leone today to cope with the very heavy voter turnout in yesterday's Presidential and Legislative elections, according to a United Nations spokesman. A military coup overthrew the Government in January, but the coup's leaders agreed to let the vote go ahead as scheduled.

A United Nations electoral assistance mission was coordinating the work of 70 international observers and will issue a statement on the outcome of the elections, the spokesman said. So far, no major incidents have been reported during voting, she added.

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Control measures in Gabon by the Ministry of Health and an international medical team appear to be containing the spread of the Ebola haemorrhagic fever in the country, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). Some 27 cases of Ebola have been reported in Gabon so far, mainly in a remote area in the north of the country. Additional suspected cases were under surveillance in the same

region. The Ministry of Health moved quickly to isolate actual and suspected Ebola cases and conducted a large-scale public information campaign about the disease, the WHO said.

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United Nations sanctions should not be used as the primary means of settling disputes between States, China told the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization. Zhang Kening said yesterday that the number of countries adversely affected by the unintended consequences of sanctions imposed under Chapter VII of the Charter had increased greatly. A procedure for consultations between the Council and third States should be set up. Agencies for early warning and dispute settlement would reduce the need to impose sanctions.

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* General Assembly and Security Council, voting concurrently, elect Gonzalo Parra-Aranguren of Venezuela to fill vacant seat on International Court of Justice.

* Secretary-General says UN is trapped in paradox of expanding responsibilities and diminishing resources and its Chief Officer must be politician, diplomat, administrator, magician and super beggar.

* To date, 39 Member States are more than two years in arrears in financial contributions to United Nations.

* Bosnian Serbs continue to leave Sarajevo suburbs after stripping assets and infrastructure; UN sends 90 civilian police monitors into Serbian suburb of Ilidza.

* United Nations Population Division's work seriously affected by Organization's financial crisis.

* Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination adds Liberia and Guatemala to list of countries under its "early warning and urgent procedures" mechanism.

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The General Assembly and the Security Council, voting concurrently, today elected Justice Gonzalo Parra-Aranguren of Venezuela to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). He will fill the seat left vacant by the death of Judge Andres Aguillar Mawdsley also of Venezuela. Mr. Parra-Aranguren, a distinguished jurist, has been a member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague, the Netherlands, since 1985. He was a member of the legislative committees which drafted a section of the Venezuelan Constitution dealing with nationality and represented his country at a number of sessions of The Hague Conference on Private International Law.

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Elections to the Court require an absolute majority in both the Council and the Assembly. Mr. Parra-Aranguren, whose term will expire in the year 2000, was elected in the first round of secret balloting in the Council. He received 97 votes in the second ballot in the General Assembly, where the required majority is 94 votes. The other candidates for the seat were Julio A. Barberis of Argentina and Francisco Villagran Kramer of Guatemala.

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The United Nations was trapped in a paradox of expanding responsibilities and diminishing resources and its Chief Administrative Officer must have the skills of a politician, diplomat, administrator and, judging by the recent negative growth budget, a magician and a super beggar, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said today. He was speaking at the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil, after receiving a medal of honour on the second day of his official visit to the country.

Globalization and fragmentation were beginning to shape the world environment, he said. Globalizing trends, including international financial flows, ready access to information and television's ability to reach even the poorest societies shaped policy decisions. Threats to the global environment, such as excessive carbon emissions, could affect future development and epidemics did not recognize national borders. Fragmentation, as evidenced by ethnic, cultural and religious resentment affected States. On the positive side, as state controls were relaxed, citizens, non-governmental organizations and business and religious groups were able to articulate their needs more than ever.

Individuals and States could not do much in the face of such powerful forces, however, the international community could articulate common values, policies and a common approach to peace through the United Nations, the Secretary-General said. Outlining an 8-point agenda, he said the UN's cycle of global conferences could raise awareness of the problems of globalization. It could also help settle conflicts arising from fragmentation through preventive diplomacy and take a stand on "orphan conflicts" such as Afghanistan's, which fell outside national interests. While supporting disarmament, the UN could draw attention to the destructive aspects of the trade in conventional weapons, small arms and landmines which contributed to fragmentation.

The Secretary-General said he faced hard choices. The UN could not solve all the world's problems, but attention must be given to priorities determined by Member States. The UN must decentralize and delegate by encouraging assistance from regional organizations, and its mandates should be clear, realistic and backed by adequate resources. Although the Secretary-General had to sometimes accept the role of scapegoat, it was essential to maintain the United Nations credibility. States must not be allowed to avoid

a problem and then blame the UN for failing to solve it. Finally, continuing UN reform was essential to ensure financial and political support, he said.

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As of today, 39 of the 185 Member States of the United Nations were more than two years behind in their financial contributions to the Organization. A UN spokesman said that meant those countries came under Article 19 of the Charter.

Under Article 19, a Member State which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions will lose its voting rights in the General Assembly if the amount equals or exceeds the contributions due for the preceeding two years. However, the Assembly may permit the Member to vote if it is satisfied the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the country's control

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The United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF) will deploy 90 monitors into the Sarajevo suburb of Ilidza tomorrow, when the Bosnian Federation police were expected to begin patrolling, according to a United Nations spokesman. Serbs were continuing to move out of the area, stripping whatever they could from buildings. Equipment from schools, hospitals and offices had been removed and several factories reportedly dismantled. There had also been some disputes over property ownership in Vogosca, as more former owners returned to the once totally Serb suburb, she added.

Currently, 337 IPTF civilian monitors were serving throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and another 164 were being processed in Zagreb. The spokesman said IPTF's mandate expired on 21 December and hopefully it would reach at least half of its authorized strength of 1,721 police officers before then. However, the UN had not heard from many countries that had pledged personnel. Neither the United States, which had promised 200 police, including 50 for Eastern Slavonia, nor Germany, which had pledged 140 police, had supplied the UN with any names, she added.

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The United Nations Population Division was trying to do more work with less resources, but its efforts were being significantly affected by the UN's financial crisis, according to the Division's Director, Joseph Chamie. Addressing the Commission on Population and Development, today, he said the trend was expected to continue and the Division's work programme was in serious question.

Several speakers noted that the UN's cycle of international conferences had produced agreements which increased the demands on the Division, while the United Nations financial crisis had reduced its budget allocations. Earlier, Mr. Chamie urged the Commission to address the complex issues surrounding abortion, the aging populations, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. International migration was another issue of concern to many Governments and one of the most contentious topics of debate in national elections.

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The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has placed Liberia and Guatemala on the list of countries under its "early warning and urgent procedures" mechanism. The Committee, which began its forty-eighth session in Geneva on Monday, monitors the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The current list of countries includes Israel, Rwanda Burundi, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

The Committee's early warning mechanism allows it to take measures which help prevent problems from escalating into conflicts. It can also initiate urgent procedures in response to problems that need immediate attention to prevent or limit serious violations of the Convention. The Committee removed Algeria and Mexico from the list, as it considered the situation in those countries could be examined in their annual reports. It also decided to postpone further action on the situation in Papua New Guinea until the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the country is published.

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UNITED NATIONS

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Security Council appoints new Prosecutor for International Criminal Tribunals for Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, to take effect 1 October.

* Secretary-General says, in some cases, United Nations can provide valuable and cost-effective alternatives to unilateral action.

* Rwanda says it needs help with reconstruction not security; will welcome UN office if UNAMIR cannot adjust mandate to assist with rebuilding efforts.

* International Narcotics Control Board concerned at weak money laundering laws, abuse of "designer drugs" and overuse of Ritalin to treat attention deficit disorder in children.

* UNCTAD's Secretary-General says its daily work and future programme will be affected by UN's financial crisis; asks Member States not to suggest new mandates.

* Trusteeship Council has fulfilled mandate and should be abolished, Malaysia tells Special Committee on Charter.

* Scientists from United States, United Kingdom and Sri Lanka share United Nations environmental prize.

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The Security Council today appointed Louise Arbour of Canada as the new Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. In unanimously adopting resolution 1047 (1996), the Council decided the appointment will date from 1 October, when the resignation of the current Prosecutor, Justice Richard J. Goldstone, takes effect.

Justice Arbour is a member of the Court of Appeals for Ontario Canada. Previously, she was a trial judge for the High Court of Justice, Supreme Court

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of Ontario and an Associate Professor and Associate Dean at the Osgoode Hall Law School of York University. She has taught in criminal law, criminal procedure, evidence and droit and published extensively on criminal law, human rights, civil liberties and gender issues.

* * *

A mentality of detachment threatens to become a model for international relations, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. Addressing the Rio Branco Institute in Brasilia today, he said many scorned the concept of an international community. Increasingly, far-away problems were not a concern. The carnage in Liberia was seen as someone else's problem, the fight to restore democracy in Haiti as someone else's struggle. Individuals and Member States must decide on their role, responsibilities and on what basis they would interact. Their choices would shape communities and determine the nature of the international environment.

The United Nations was not established as a substitute for individual action by Member States but, in some cases, it could provide useful alternatives and be a valuable substitute for unilateral action, the Secretary-General said. Countries with the capacity could act alone, but the UN could be a cost-effective way to contain regional conflict, promote democracy and human rights, curb refugee flows and bring stability to troubled regions. If the UN was not used, Member States would have fewer options in emergencies and those with the capacity would be under greater pressure to act alone during humanitarian catastrophes, conflicts and aggression.

* * *

The situation in Rwanda was improving and what it needed was assistance for reconstruction not security, the country's Permanent Representative said today. Ambassador Manzi Bakuramutsa told correspondents that concerted efforts were being made to encourage the return of refugees. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) could stay on, if it responded to the country's needs and helped with reconstruction. If not, then his Government would welcome a United Nations office. He believed strongly that the UN's role could be changed to meet Rwanda's new needs, he added.

Unfortunately, Rwanda had not yet been given a list of UNAMIR equipment which had to be removed from the country despite a request several weeks ago, Ambassador Bakuramutsa continued. It had also asked the Secretary-General if the Government could keep UNAMIR trucks to help with the return of refugees. Whenever the UNAMIR mandate was up for renewal, negative reports on his country become more frequent. No one was talking about Rwanda's reconciliation and reconstruction efforts and its work to set up a judicial system to deal the perpetrators of genocide.

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If Governments could trace and break the money trail, they might be able to attack the problem of drug trafficking all over the world, according to Herbert Okun, a member of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). Introducing the Board's annual report yesterday, he told correspondents that vulnerable money trails were often the only way to trace organizers of illegal drug operations, but many countries lacked appropriate laws or procedures to prevent the laundering of criminal proceeds. There was also no concerted world-wide action against money laundering nor any reporting system on the seizure and confiscation of drug trafficking proceeds. Preventing money laundering was a problem for developing countries where the vast sums controlled by criminal groups could exacerbate corruption, Mr. Okun added.

The report also draws special attention to the sharp rise in the world-wide use of methylphenidate, a stimulant marketed under the brand name Ritalin, which is used in the United States and some other countries to treat attention deficit disorder in children. However, the disorder might be over diagnosed and Ritalin prescribed before other treatment was considered, the report says. Many children remained on the drug into adolescence and even adulthood, with serious health consequences. The substance was also abused by adolescents who obtained it illegally from children undergoing treatment.

Mr. Okun said the Board was alarmed at the growing abuse of synthetic drugs, which were made in bathtubs or laboratories and include methamphetamine, also known as "ice" or "shabu" and the designer drug "ecstasy". They were popular among young people and, unlike heroin or cocaine, were produced in the country of consumption or moved within relatively small regions, making it harder to curb their production and shipment. Abuse was a major problem in the Far East, Hawaii and western United States.

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The daily work and future programme of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) will be affected by the UN's financial crisis, as well as the correlated issue of reform, according to UNCTAD's Secretary-General Rubens Ricupero. Addressing the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board this week, he said that as he must reduce overall capacity Member States should refrain from suggesting further mandates. They should also be prepared to terminate some programmes.

UNCTAD would aim for a 12 per cent vacancy rate among professional staff and seven per cent rate among the general service staff during the biennium, he said. The main options were non-renewal of short-term contracts and the non-replacement of professional staff who reached retirement age. Financial constraints or administrative questions should not be the main factor in determining approaches to issues. While efficiency in costs and savings was

needed, his ultimate goal was to provide better services for the international community at the lowest possible cost, he added.

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The United Nations Trusteeship Council had fulfilled its mandate and should be abolished, according to the Permanent Representative of Malaysia, Razali Ismail. He told the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization that Member States must be ready to disband structures whose raison d'etre had ceased to exist. The Special Committee dealt yesterday with the question of the Trusteeship Council, the maintenance of peace and security and United Nations sanctions.

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Three scientists from the United States, the United Kingdom and Sri Lanka were awarded the 1995 United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) Sasakawa Environment Prize for outstanding contributions to the protection and management of the world environment. The Prize, which was established in 1984, is considered one of the most prestigious and valuable environmental awards in the world and winners are selected by a distinguished panel of international leaders and environmentalists.

The Director of the Missouri Botanical Garden, Peter Raven and Norman Myers of the United Kingdom shared half of the $200,000 UNEP Sasakawa Prize for their work over nearly three decades to investigate, document and analyze the scientific background to two major environmental problems: the decline of tropical forests and the worldwide loss of biodiversity. They have broadened the scope of their work to include population, poverty, desertification, global warming and consumption patterns. The other winner was Professor Canaganayagan Suriyakumaran of Sri Lanka, a pioneer in the environmental field, whose work in fostering concepts of multi-sectoralism has helped shape responses to environmental challenges.

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F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

* Security Council extends mission in Haiti for final four months until 30 June; reduces number of troops and civilian police.

* Secretary-General says Rwandan Government has strong reservations about UN troop presence; therefore, no alternative to UNAMIR withdrawal after mandate ends on 8 March.

* UN launches $823 million inter-agency appeal for Bosnia and Herzegovina and neighbouring republics.

* UNHCR needs $60 million for its voluntary repatriation programme in Liberia.

* IAEA will coordinate and manage radiological study of Mururoa and Fangataufa atolls in French Polynesia, beginning next week.

* General Assembly should adopt declaration on basic principles for peace-keeping and dispute settlement, according to Russian Federation.

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The Security Council has extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) for a final four months until 30 June. Troop levels will be decreased to no more than 1,200 and the number of civilian police to no more than 300 personnel. In unanimously adopting resolution 1048 (1996), last night, the Council said the Mission aimed to help the Haitian Government sustain the secure and stable environment already established and professionalize the national police.

The Secretary-General was asked to take appropriate steps to further reduce the Mission's strength, consistent with its mandate. He was also asked to initiate planning by 1 June for UNMIH's complete withdrawal and to report to the Council by 15 June on the resolution's implementation, including United Nations activities to promote development in the country.

The Council asked all countries to support the United Nations and Member States actions in Haiti and to make generous, voluntary contributions to cover

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the Mission's costs. It also appealed for voluntary contributions for the trust fund set up to support the national police. The Council reiterated the commitment of the international community and financial institutions to support Haiti's social, economic and institutional development and stressed how important that was for sustaining a secure and stable environment.

* * *

Given the present circumstances there seemed no alternative to the complete withdrawal of the United Nations Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) after its current mandate expired on 8 March, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In a report to the Security Council, dated 29 February, he said the United Nations still had a useful role to play in Rwanda, however, the Government had not consented to any of the options proposed by his Special Representative, Shaharyar Khan, and had expressed strong reservations to the presence of UN troops in the country after 8 March.

Three post-UNAMIR options were proposed: a) a small political office which would help the Government promote national reconciliation, strengthen the judicial system, facilitate the return of refugees and rebuild the country's infrastructure; b) an office plus a military component to monitor and provide logistical support for the return of refugees; c) a regional office to promote security, stability and development in the Great Lakes region.

Despite significant progress towards normalcy, Rwanda's relative peace was threatened as long as more than 1.5 million refugees were camped along its borders, the Secretary-General said. Former Rwandan army elements and organized militias added to the threat and intimidated refugees from returning home. However, the refugees were also uncertain about security conditions inside Rwanda. The deployment of UN troops, particularly in areas where large numbers were expected to return, could speed up repatriation by building confidence and providing much needed logistical support, he added.

* * *

The United Nations today launched an Inter-Agency humanitarian appeal for $823 for Bosnia and Herzegovina and neighbouring republics. For the first time, a UN appeal will cover repatriation in the war-ravaged region. Under the Dayton Peace Agreement, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible for the return of 2 million refugees and displaced persons in Bosnia. The Agency estimates the programme will cost $353 million in 1996.

An estimated 40,000 people have already returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina, with or without UNHCR help, since the signing of the Dayton Agreement in December. According to the Agency, building confidence among the

population is particularly important. While there have been some successes for example in Travnik and Jajce, there have been problems in places like Mostar, Bugojno and Sarajevo, where thousands of Serb residents have recently fled suburbs which are coming under the Bosnian Federation's control. The UNHCR has a presence in all Serb suburbs and has brought in additional staff to try and bolster confidence among the remaining Serbs.

* * *

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) made an urgent appeal today for $60 million for its voluntary repatriation programme in Liberia. Since the signing of a peace agreement last August, an estimated 30,000 refugees have returned from the border areas of Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea, most in the last two months. However, lack of funds and sporadic clashes have prevented the UNHCR from giving relief to the refugees, except on an ad hoc basis.

According to the UNHCR, it is seeking funds because so many refugees are willing to repatriate and it did not want to be unprepared if the return gathers momentum. The appeal will cover costs of transportation and logistics, food, crop production, shelter, health services and income generation.

* * *

A study of the radiological situation at the Mururoa and Fangataufa atolls in French Polynesia will begin next week. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will manage and coordinate the project, which was requested by the French Government. It has agreed to provide the IAEA with information and data for the approximately 18-month long study.

* * *

The General Assembly should adopt a declaration on basic principles for United Nations peace-keeping missions and dispute settlement mechanisms, according to a representative of the Russian Federation. Vladimir Fedorov told the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, yesterday, that his Government's working paper on the draft declaration was meant to codify criteria, principles and general United Nations practice. They would guide the Security Council, regional organizations and agencies in solving conflicts and disputes.

Mr. Fedorov said the United Nations did not have a set of written guiding principles on how to tackle the new kinds of conflicts such as ethnic, religious and other intra-State disputes, that now plagued many parts of the world. Their increase had caught the international community unprepared, he added.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

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DH/2093
4 March 1996

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General denounces terrorist bombing in Israel as "heinous act of cowardice"; says international community must not tolerate undermining of peace process.

* Israel says peace process at dangerous stage; urges Palestinian Authority to take bolder steps against terrorists.

* Secretary-General gravely concerned over bombings by Sudanese Government planes of airfields used by relief agencies.

* Secretary-General arrives in Mexico City.

* New Prosecutor says International Criminal Tribunals are milestone in history of criminal and international humanitarian law and step towards more permanent system.

* Elections in Sierra Leone transparent and free, according to international observers; run-off needed because no party receives necessary two-thirds vote.

* Commission on Population and Development concludes twenty-ninth session; calls for international community to accelerate response to Cairo Population Conference.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was very saddened by the news of another terrorist bombing in Israel this morning, according to a United Nations spokesman. The Secretary-General denounced as a "heinous act of cowardice" the fourth terrorist bombing against innocent civilians in the last 9 days. "The civilized world will not, must not, tolerate these acts of terrorism which have no goal except the undermining of the Middle East peace process".

The senseless carnage must end, the Secretary-General said, appealing for all those who advocated violence to come to their senses. For the third

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For information media—not an official record

time in 9 days, he would send condolences to the Israeli Government and his heart was filled with sadness for the bereaved families, the spokesman added. Yesterday, the Secretary-General expressed shock and outrage over the bombing in Jerusalem.

Meanwhile, Members of the Security Council have condemned the terrorist attacks in Jerusalem on 3 March and in Tel Aviv on 4 March. Council President Legwaila Legwaila (Botswana) told correspondents today, Members extended their sympathy and deepest condolences to the Israeli Government and people, and the families of the victims and wished the wounded a speedy recovery. The vile acts had the clear purpose of trying to undermine the Middle East peace process through terror, they said, and called on the parties to consolidate peace and increase cooperation to curb violence and combat terrorism.

"Our hearts go out to the people of Israel during these trying hours in their history and we hope the peace process will continue and those who want to destroy it will not succeed," Ambassador Legwaila said.

* * *

Israel had declared war against those trying to undermine the Middle East peace process, the country's Permanent Representative Gad Yaacobi, told correspondents today, after briefing the Security Council on the terrorist bombing in Jerusalem this morning. Ambassador Yaacobi said he expected a clear-cut statement from the Council condemning the wave of terrorist bombings, which had killed over 60 Israelis. His country was traumatized and no one could say when or how the peace process would be enhanced, although there was a general feeling it would continue once Israel's security had been ensured, he added.

The Israeli Government was shocked that islamic fundamentalist terrorists, from places partly controlled by the Palestinian Authority, were attempting to kill the peace process, which was at a very dangerous stage. It might be undermined if the activities continued, Ambassador Yaacobi said. He urged the Palestinian Authority to take much bolder steps to save the peace and carry out their commitments and said Israel would do whatever it could to curb the cancer in the region. Measures started yesterday, included closure of the territories, separation of the communities and more aggressive security measures to protect Israelis and enhance the peace process. Iran, one of the main support rs of Hamas and the Islamic jihad, had supplied financial resources, arms, training facilities and political support, but some financing had also come from Europe and groups in the United States, he added.

* * *

The Secretary-General has expressed grave concern over the bombing by Sudanese Government planes of airfields used by relief agencies, according to

a United Nations spokesman. An airstrip in Akuer, southern Sudan was bombed on 17 February, after food had been delivered by United Nations/Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) aircraft operating on a flight plan approved by the Sudanese Government. Many people, including women and children were waiting for the food deliveries. Another airstrip was bombed the same day, while an International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) aircraft was on the ground.

The Secretary-General was alarmed that the incidents occurred in an area approved for relief flights by the Sudanese Government, the spokesman said. The disruption of ongoing relief activities was unprecedented in the six-year history of OLS and had serious implications for humanitarian operations which brought relief to over 4 million people in the country. He has asked the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to seek clarification from the Government and assurance such actions will not be repeated.

* * *

On his arrival in Mexico City today, the Secretary-General expressed his gratitude for the Mexican Government's support for United Nations peace initiatives in the region. He recalled that in 1992, two weeks after his election, his first visit as Secretary-General to Mexico was to sign the Chapultepec agreement on El Salvador. It had been a great success for the United Nations because peace prevailed in that country. Mexico had also provided police personnel to help in El Salvador. Now, the Mexican Government was helping United Nations again by hosting the Guatemalan peace negotiations.

* * *

Without justice, including the very personal attribution of blame, which was the landmark of criminal law, cycles of fear, resentment and violence would continue unbroken, according to the new Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, Justice Louise Arbour, who will succeed Justice Richard Goldstone on 1 October. She told correspondents today, the creation of the Tribunals was a milestone and the biggest chapter in the history of criminal and international humanitarian law. By providing a realistic mechanism the world community had called on the principles of criminal justice to shape a just and peaceful world.

The Tribunals were also a step towards a more permanent form of international criminal justice, whose exact form and scope would be profoundly consensual, Justice Arbour continued. A sound base to enforce international humanitarian law would call on criminal justice principles and be established with the full scope and independence of an international court. The Tribunals must be allowed to live up to their promise as it had taken a long time to overcome the legal wrangles which had made it impossible to develop such a body. As with most institutions, there would be times when enthusiasm would

vary, but the Tribunals had already produced results, rapidly and forcefully, she added.

The legitimacy of the Tribunals would be judged by the international community, which had established them with clearly defined legal mandates, and by building, in a consensual way, an operation that satisfied jurists and non-jurists worldwide that they worked with decency, fairness and vigor. Their rules of evidence and procedure were a model of fairness for defendants and many countries would do well to enact such rules, including the right to financially aided legal assistance. The structure was in place for cooperation between the Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Force (IFOR) to enforce the provisions of the Dayton peace accords related to war crimes. However, the primary responsibility for compliance rested with the parties to the peace agreement, she added.

* * *

The elections on 26 February in Sierra Leone were conducted in a transparent manner, according to the Joint International Observer Group. While there were some security problems that hindered the registration of voters and some intimidation by armed elements, the elections were in general free. However, since no party got the required 55 per cent of the vote, a run-off election should be held in two weeks between the parties that received the highest number of ballots.

* * *

The Commission on Population and Development has called for the international community to accelerate its response to the challenges of the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994. The Commission approved texts at the end of its twenty-ninth session on Friday, which emphasize the importance of information, education and communication as a follow-up strategy. It urges the Population Division to highlight efforts by Governments. It also asked the Secretary-General to arrange a liaison between non-governmental organizations and the Population Division to facilitate the dissemination of information. The text will be taken up the Social and Economic Council at its next substantive session.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Security Council condemns in strongest terms violence in Burundi; demands all concerned refrain from inciting violence or destabilizing Government.

* Secretary-General asks General Assembly to extend MINUGUA mandate until 31 December; says repeated and serious human rights violations continue in Guatemala.

* Secretary-General in Mexico talks on Security Council reform; says countries will not accept wealthiest and most powerful States dealing with global issues behind closed doors.

* Renewed General Assembly session requested by Cuba will meet tomorrow.

* United States will ask Congress to approve 5-year plan for paying UN arrears; wants to reduce share of regular budget from 25 to 20 per cent.

* Less than 20,000 ethnic Serbs remain in Sarajevo out of pre-Dayton population of up to 60,000.

* Secretary-General's acting Special Representative in Western Sahara tries to break stalemate in identification process.

* Secretary-General appoints new Special Representative for Haiti.

* * *

The Security Council today condemned in the strongest terms, violent acts against civilians, refugees and humanitarian personnel and the assassination of Government officials in Burundi. It demanded that all concerned refrain from violence or incitement to violence and from seeking to destabilize security or depose the Government by force or other unconstitutional means. In unanimously adopting resolution 1049 (1996), the Council called on all concerned to engage

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in urgent, serious, negotiations and mutual accommodation, within the framework of the National Debate agreed to at the Convention of Government on 10 September 1994, and to increase efforts towards national reconciliation.

The Council also called on all parties to cooperate fully with the Commission of Inquiry and reminded the Government of its responsibility for the security and protection of Commission members and personnel. It asked the Secretary-General to continue consultations with the Government and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Observer Mission in Burundi to ensure adequate security for the Commission and asked Member States to provide adequate financing for it.

The Council asked the Secretary-General to report on the possibility of establishing, through voluntary contributions, a United Nations radio station in Burundi to promote national reconciliation and dialogue. It reiterated its invitation to Member States to cooperate in identifying and dismantling radio stations which incited hatred and violence.

Member States and regional and international non-governmental organizations were invited to be ready to provide assistance to support progress by the parties towards national dialogue. They were also invited to cooperate with Government initiatives for comprehensive rehabilitation in military and police reforms, judicial assistance, development programmes and support at international financial institutions. The Council encouraged the OAU to increase the size of its observer mission and stressed the need for military observers to operate in any part of the country without restrictions.

The Secretary-General was asked in consultation with the Government, Heads of State of the Great Lakes Region in Africa, other concerned countries, the OAU and the European Union to intensify preparations for a regional Conference for Peace, Security and Development in the Great Lakes region of Africa, which would also address the issues of political and economic stability. He was also encouraged to continue consultations with Member States and the OAU on contingency planning to support a comprehensive dialogue and for a rapid humanitarian response if there was widespread violence or a serious deterioration in the humanitarian situation.

* * *

Serious and repeated human rights violations continued to occur in Guatemala and had gone unpunished, according to the Secretary-General. Most violations were due to actions by State agents or groups connected to it, or the failure of the State to ensure the safety of citizens. However, the violations did not appear to be the result of Government policy. In the context of armed conflict, serious human rights violations and failure to prevent civilian suffering had also occurred owing to actions by the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG).

(more)

The Secretary-General's comments were contained in report to the General Assembly, dated 16 February, on the United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights and of Compliance with the Commitments of the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights in Guatemala (MINUGUA). In recommending MINUGUA's mandate be renewed until 31 December, he said it was critical for the Government and the leadership of the URNG to carry out MINUGUA's recommendations, which had too often been ignored.

* * *

Security Council reform could be at the heart of a United Nations transformed into a truly effective system for the maintenance of international peace and security, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said yesterday, during a lecture at the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The four basic reform issues were an increase in the permanent membership, an increase in non-permanent membership only, the number of affirmative votes needed for the Council to act and enhancing its working methods.

The Secretary-General said reform of the Council would create ideas, foster communications, improve coordination and gain wider acceptance for United Nations decisions. The immensely difficult tasks which lay ahead of the Organization would require a wider and deeper foundation for common action. Such improvements would in turn further the democratization of the internationally system. States realized that issues once considered internal and subject to their policy decisions alone, were now affected by the forces of globalization. They would not and could not accept a situation in which global issues were dealt with by representatives of only a few of the wealthiest and most powerful countries, acting behind closed doors.

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The General Assembly will hold a resumed session tomorrow at the request of Cuba, according to a United Nations Spokesman. To date, the Foreign Minister of Cuba is the only representative scheduled to address the session, she said.

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The United States Government will ask Congress to approve a five-year plan for paying its arrears to the United Nations, the Country's Permanent Representative, Madeleine Albright said yesterday. It would also ask Members to reduce from 25 to 20 per cent, the U.S. share of the UN's regular budget, which would have the effect of reducing its peace-keeping rate to 25 per cent. In an address to the Women's Fund of North Carolina, Ambassador Albright said her Government expected Congress to insist the funds would actually be paid as the United Nations reformed, kept its budget down and cut unnecessary staff. While it was possible some in Congress would never support funding for the UN, the majority would like to see the country pay what it owes, she added.

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A United Nations spokesman said Ambassador Albright's comments on why the UN was so important to America were very good and should be required reading. Noting proposals by the Russian Federation to pay off its approximately $500 million debt over a certain period of time, she said the UN was very happy that there would be movement in the area of finances. However, the five-year period seemed very far away to an Organization that was facing total bankruptcy at the end of the year.

* * *

Less than 20,000 ethnic Serbs remained in Sarajevo out of the 50,000 to 60,000 who lived in the capital before the Dayton peace accords, a United Nations spokesman said today. Every day, more public and private buildings were being torched and the United Nations was particularly worried about the situation in Grbavicia.

The situation appeared to have stabilized in the suburbs of Vogosca and Ilijas, where Bosnian Federation police, accompanied by United Nations civilian police monitors, began patrolling in late February, the spokesman said. However, only about 700 people in Vogosca had registered with the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) indicating they wanted to stay. Many of those might leave and others, intending to stay, might be too afraid to register. The suburb of Hadizi, which would come under the control of Bosnian Federation police on Wednesday, was also emptying out and only 120 Serbs had registered with the UNHCR.

* * *

The identification process in the Western Sahara had not resumed, and so far, only some 60,000 people had been identified, a United Nations spokesman said today. However, the Secretary-General's acting Special Representative, Erik Jensen, had been in touch with the parties in an effort to break the current stalemate. Without their cooperation it would be very difficult for the United Nations to resume the identification process.

At the end of January, the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Western Sahara (MINURSO) for only four months until 31 May. The Spokesman said the Council had made it very clear that unless there was meaningful progress to complete the identification plan, the Secretary-General would have to submit a detailed plan for a phased withdrawal of the United Nations operation.

Meanwhile, Major Jose Leandro of Portugal will take up his appointment as new Force Commander of MINURSO on 1 April.

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The Secretary-General today appointed Enrique ter Horst of Venezuela as his New Special Representative for Haiti to replace Lakhdar Brahimi of Algeria. Prior to his appointment, Mr. ter Horst served as Special Representative for El Salvador and was Chief of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL).

A new Force Commander in Haiti was also appointed today. Brigadier General Pierre Daigle of Canada will assume command of the Military component of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH). Previously, he served as the Canadian Contingent Commander for the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia. Colonel Philippe Balladur of France has been appointed as the new Police Commissioner of the Civilian Police component for UNMIH.

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UNITED NATIONS

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General says the UN should take initiative to deal with multinational dimensions of terrorism.

* Cuba, in address to General Assembly, asks if sovereign right to defend borders and national security is only prerogative of powerful and not poor or small countries.

* Plan of action for Indo-Chinese refugees to end in June.

* UN Centre for Human Rights to hold expert seminar on indigenous land rights.

* Bangkok forum to focus on impending urban crisis in Asia.

* Seminar in Rio de Janeiro to examine role of public administration in development of infrastructure

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has called for the United Nations to take a new initiative to deal with the multinational dimensions of terrorism. In a statement issued in Mexico City yesterday, the Secretary-General said an upsurge in terrorism required the international community to stand together, speak out and unit against those despicable acts of violence. Referring to Monday's terrorist bombing in Tel Aviv, he said nothing could justify the acts of those who murdered and maimed innocent people. No grievance could excuse cowardly attempts to spread fear and death among a civilian population.

Terrorists feared negotiations and rejected democratic processes, which was why they stepped up their attacks whenever there was progress towards peace, he continued. The international community must not let terrorists succeed, nor give credence to their explanations. The Middle East peace process and progress towards peace and justice must go forward.

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For information media—not an official record

Meanwhile, the Secretary-General wound up his official visit to Mexico today, meeting first with United Nations staff and later with the Chairman of the Revolutionary Democratic Party and the former Mexican Ambassador to the United Nations, Borcillio Munez-Ledo.

* * *

Cuba had exercised the right of all States to defend its territorial integrity, sovereignty and peace of its citizens, the Cuban Foreign Minister, Roberto Robaina Gonzalez said today. He was addressing a resumed session of the General Assembly on the downing of two American civilian planes by Cuban airforce jets on 24 February. He asked whether the sovereign right to defend borders and national security was only a prerogative of the powerful and not the poor and small countries. He asked whether the United States would have tolerated such provocations and accepted aircraft from Cuba or any other country illegally entering its airspace to drop subversive leaflets?

He said the incident on 24 February was not the result of a deliberate act by Cuba. In last twenty months, "Brothers to the Rescue", the organization which flew the planes, violated Cuban airspace 25 times. Twice in January, they had dropped hundreds of thousands of subversive flyers over Havana. Cuba had begged the U.S. to prevent the flights which violated the laws of both countries. In September 1994, United States civil aviation authorities admitted that the flights threatened genuine efforts taken by the U.S. Coast Guard to rescue illegal Cuban emigrants.

Referring to legislation passed by the United States Senate yesterday to tighten the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba, Mr. Gonzalez said the restrictions were an open challenge to the Assembly's condemnation of the blockade. The extraterritorial dimensions of the legislation went beyond national boundaries and violated the laws of many countries. It curtailed freedom of commerce, a sacrosanct principle of the contemporary economic system, and created international legal principles.

The Permanent Representative of the United States, Madeleine Albright, exercising a right of reply, said her Government did not seek a confrontation with Cuba and the United States and its people wished the tragedy had not occured. However, it could not be silent when its citizens were murdered and could not allow the Cuban Government, which had ordered the crime, to transfer blame to the victims. Cuba had knowingly and wilfully and in broad daylight, shot down two unarmed aircraft which were clearly marked as civilian. The aircraft were no threat to the Cuban people or Government, they were in international airspace and were destroyed intentionally and in violation of international law.

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A plan of action set up to help refugees from Viet Nam and Laos will formally end on 30 June. The plan was adopted seven years ago by the Steering Committee of the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees. The decision means the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will phase out care and maintenance of facilities in South-East Asian camps for rejected asylum seekers as of 1 July. It will maintain alternative arrangements in Hong Kong. The Agency's extensive programme to monitor people who have returned to Viet Nam and Laos and its financial assistance and micro-development project to facilitate the return of refugees will continue.

* * *

The United Nations Centre for Human Rights will hold an expert seminar on the practical aspects of indigenous land rights and claims. The seminar, which will be held in Canada from 24 to 28 March, will mark the International Decade of Indigenous People. It will focus on three major themes: the negotiating process and legal arrangements for demarcating and titling indigenous lands; opportunities for economic development and arrangements for sharing resources; and the role of the United Nations in supporting land rights and development through training or use of natural resources.

* * *

The Second Asia-Pacific Urban Forum will focus on the looming crisis in Asian cities when it meets in Bangkok from 11 to 15 March. It will discuss a paper prepared by a group of experts from Asia and the Pacific under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The paper examines accountability and transparency by politicians and public servants in the face of the impending crisis and "gangsterism" and corruption in public housing.

* * *

The United Nations and Brazil will hold a three-day inter-regional seminar on the role of public administration in developing infrastructure and protecting the environment. The seminar, which will begin tomorrow in Rio de Janeiro, will address how governments and public administrators can manage economic growth in a framework of sustainable development. It will focus on appropriate infrastructural facilities, protection of the environment and equitable social development.

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UNITED NATIONS

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General, in message to mark International Women's Day, notes significant gains of last 20 years but says no society treats its women as well as its men.

* Bosnian Federation police move into Sarajevo suburb of Hadzici; find 50 mostly elderly Serbs remain out of population of 9,000.

* More than 17,000 UNITA troops now quartered in Angola; parties agree quartering and formation of unified Angolan armed forces will be completed by June.

* Special Committee on Charter concludes session with recommendations on aid to third States affected by United Nations Sanctions.

* New round of United Nations-sponsored Guatemala peace talks to begin 27 March in Mexico City.

* Rwandan Government accepts Secretary-General's proposal to maintain the Office of the Special Representative in Kigali for six months.

* Comprehensive Plan of Action to resolve exodus of people from Viet Nam and Laos to formally end on June 30.

* * *

The status of women had improved markedly in the half-century of the existence of the United Nations and there had been significant progress in the past twenty years, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. However, no society treated its women as well as its men and progress had not been uniform, he said in a message to mark International Women's Day, read by his Special Adviser, Under-Secretary-General Rosario Green. Poverty and inadequate health care had a particular impact on the lives of women and their children. The majority of the more than 1.3 billion people struggling to survive on less than a single dollar a day were women.

For information media - not an official record

(more)

The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing last September, declared that the empowerment of women living in poverty was central to all sustainable development efforts, he continued. Thousands of women who attended the Conference were taking the results to their communities. They were developing strategies and working to translate the global consensus into concrete action at the grass-roots level. The fresh surge of energy must be sustained and supported at all levels of the international community. It was critical for women's advancement that decisions made at major UN international conferences during the last five years were implemented. The conferences had defined an agenda for action in which women would be a positive force for change and progress for themselves and society.

There was a concrete strategy in the Organization to promote true gender balance in the international civil service, and he was holding managers accountable, the Secretary-General said. He had introduced an item on "the status of women in the secretariats of the United Nations system" in the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). There must be vigilance particularly during the UN's financial crisis that the resolve to pursue strategies and plans are not weakened and women are not affected disproportionately, he added.

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Bosnian Federation police entered Hadzici today, the third of five Serb-controlled suburbs in Sarajevo which will come under Government authority and found only 50 mostly elderly Serb residents out of a total of 9,000. An estimated 60,000 Serbs have evacuated the capital in the last 25 days. Gangs of thugs have been telling residents to leave the suburb and burning houses and schools. The Federation police were accompanied by 53 United Nations civilian police monitors.

A number of officers sent to join the United Nations International Police Task Forces (IPTF) in Bosnia and Herzegovina had to be sent home after failing language or driving tests, the spokesman said. To date, 43 civilian police from 12 countries had to be repatriated, because they did not have the skills to drive on icy mountain roads or speak English adequately. The United Nations would implement a pre-screening process to help Governments test police, she added.

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In Angola, over 17,000 troops from the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) have been quartered in four sites, a spokesman for the Organization said today. The United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) hopes to open four additional sites by next week to accommodate about 20,000 more troops.

At a recent meeting in Libreville, Gabon, Angolan President Eduardo dos Santos and UNITA leader Joseph Savimbi agreed that the quartering of UNITA troops and the formation of a unified Angolan armed forces would be completed by June, the spokesman said.

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The Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations has sent a report to the General Assembly containing recommendations on assistance to third States affected by UN sanctions. The Assembly was asked to consider an appropriate organizational framework to address implementation of Charter provisions on helping third States affected by sanctions imposed under Chapter VII. The Committee is mandated to examine issues relating to the maintenance of international peace and security, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the strengthening of the role of the organization. It concluded a two-week session yesterday.

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The United Nations will convene a new round of talks between the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG) to be held from 27 to 29 March in Mexico City, a UN spokesman said today. The talks will focus on social and economic aspects of agrarian conditions in the country.

The Secretary-General was encouraged by the positive outcome of the last round of talks between the parties and the rapprochement achieved at a recent meeting between Guatemalan President Alvaro Arzu and the URNG leadership. He hopes significant progress towards concluding an agreement will be made at the upcoming round of talks, the spokesman added.

* * *

The Rwandan Government has accepted the proposal made by the Secretary-General to maintain the Office of the Special Representative in Kigali for a period of six months. The decision was contained in letters received from the Foreign Minster of Rwanda and the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations, according to a UN Spokesman.

The retention of the Office was one of the options put forward by the Secretary-General who said this office would work to strengthen the judicial system, facilitate the return of refugees and rehabilitate the national infrastructure.

Meanwhile, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), reports from Kigali that during the month of February, over 23,000 refugees returned to Rwanda from Burundi, Zaire, Tanzania and Uganda.

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The Comprehensive Plan of Action to resolve the exodus of people from Viet Nam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic would formally come to an end on June 30, according to an announcement in Geneva. The Steering Committee of the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees, which adopted the Plan seven years ago, declared that the Plan has successfully met its objectives and that clandestine departures from the countries of origin have essentially come to an end.

The decision to end the Plan of Action means that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), will phase out care and maintenance activities in South-East Asian camps for rejected asylum seekers as of 1 July. However, in Hong Kong, which shelters a large number of rejected asylum seekers, UNHCR will maintain alternative arrangements.

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Daily Highlights

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UNITED NATIONS

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F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

* Security Council asks Secretary-General to maintain United Nations office in the country headed by his Special Representative.

* Rapid conclusion of talks on all outstanding military matters is critical for advancement of peace process in Angola, Secretary-General says.

* In former Yugoslavia, there are more reports of Bosnian Serbs abandoning their homes.

* Secretary-General says issue of Taiwan is an internal one.

* General Assembly President ends official visit to China and Japan.

* ICAO to initiate investigation on shooting down of US-registered private civil aircraft by Cuban warplanes.

* Outbreak of cerebrospinal meningitis in the northern Nigeria causes over 1,000 deaths, WHO says.

* * *

The Security Council this afternoon took note of the Secretary-General's arrangements for the withdrawal of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). Unanimously adopting Resolution 1050 (1996) the Council encouraged the Secretary-General to maintain a United Nations office in the country headed by his Special Representative. The office would include the present UN communications system and radio station and its purposes would be to support the efforts of Rwanda to promote national reconciliation, strengthen the judicial system, facilitate the return of refugees and rehabilitate the country's infrastructure, and to coordinate the efforts of the United Nations to that end.

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The withdrawal of the Mission is to start tomorrow, 9 March in accordance with the arrangements agreed to by the Council in resolution 1029 (1995) of 12 December 1995. That resolution required that UNAMIR be withdrawn within six weeks of the end of the mandate. The last military elements are expected to depart by mid-April when all installations will be turned over to other UN agencies or to the Government of Rwanda. Staff officers will leave shortly thereafter.

The Council paid tribute to the work of UNAMIR and to the personnel who served in it and stressed the continued importance of the voluntary and safe repatriation of Rwandan refugees and of genuine national reconciliation. The Council also called upon States and organizations to continue to provide assistance for the reconstruction of Rwanda and the rehabilitation of the infrastructure of the country, including the Rwandan justice system.

UNAMIR was established by the Security Council on 5 October 1993 by resolution 872 (1993). The Mission's initial 6-month mandate was to assist in the implementation of the peace agreement signed by the then Government of Rwanda and the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, in August 1993.

* * *

A rapid conclusion of the talks on all outstanding military matters is critical for the advancement of the peace process in Angola, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In a report on the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III), the Secretary-General said the Government of Angola must intensify practical preparations for the integration of personnel from the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), into the Angolan Armed Forces and administrative and governmental structures. He said confidence between the parties must be reinforced by the release of all prisoners held by UNITA, unrestricted circulation of people throughout Angola, the launching of a country-wide campaign to disarm civilians, the transformation of UNITA into a political party and the effective implementation of other aspects of the Lusaka Protocol.

The Secretary-General welcomed the recent meetings between President Eduardo dos Santos and UNITA leader Dr. Jonas Savimbi, noting that these high-level meetings can play an important role in the promotion of national reconciliation and encourage the steady advance of the peace process. While he commended the Government for

the implementation of several of its commitments and UNITA's quartering of more than 16,000 troops, the Secretary-General however warned, that time is running short if the parties are to complete numerous outstanding tasks foreseen in the Lusaka Protocol.

* * *

In the former Yugoslavia, there are more reports of Bosnian Serbs abandoning their homes. A UN spokesman says Ilidza will be transferred to Federation control next week and field workers are reporting that a large number of ethnic Serbs are fleeing the area. She said that the rate of property destruction had increased quite a bit. Estimates are that since 15 December, 53,000 out of an estimated population in Serb-controlled Sarajevo of about 70,000 had left.

The International Police Task Force (IPTF) civilian police monitors have so far registered 1,400 people in Ilidza, who would stay after the transfer of authority. The spokesman quoted field workers as saying there was a general upsurge in crime particularly in Vogosca, Ilyjas and Razlovac and they attributed that to youths from Sarajevo entering the new transition area.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali says the issue of Taiwan is an internal one. The view was expressed in a statement issued through a spokesman in answer to queries from UN correspondents over military exercises being conducted by China.

The Secretary-General hoped that all concerned would exercise restraint so as not to interfere with the rights of other States under international law and to avoid tensions in the area. The issue of Taiwan was of course an internal one on which the General Assembly had ruled unequivocally in its 26 session. The Secretary-General noted China's firm and long-standing position that this issue would be resolved solely by peaceful means.

* * *

General Assembly President Professor Diogo Freitas do Amaral has concluded a four-day official visit to China and Japan. In China, the Assembly President's discussions focussed on the process of reform of

the United Nations, bearing in mind the important role that falls on China in this connection, by virtue of its permanent membership in the Security Council and its closeness to the concerns of developing countries which comprise a majority of the Organization's membership. The Chinese authorities set out in detail their thinking on reform of the Assembly and of the Security Council.

In Japan, Professor Freitas do Amaral held discussions with Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and other senior government officials. They discussed various aspects of the process of reform of the United Nations, including the financial aspects, enlargement of the Security Council and restructuring the Economic and Social area.

The Assembly President said that the reform process, which involved the broad membership of the Organization, could now enter a more intensive and concrete phase of discussion with the tabling in recent weeks of three specific proposals, by the European Union, the United States and Japan.

* * *

Responding to requests from the Government of the United States of America, the Government of Cuba and the United Nations Security Council, the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) considered the incident in which two United States-registered private civil aircraft were destroyed on 24 February 1996 by Cuban military aircraft.

Meeting yesterday, at its Headquarters at Montreal, the Council in a resolution, directed the ICAO Secretary-General to immediately initiate an investigation of the incident in its entirety. The report of the investigation is to be submitted to the ICAO Council within 60 days. It will then be forwarded to the United Nations Security Council.

* * *

The outbreak of cerebrospinal meningitis in the northern part of Nigeria, has caused 1,181 deaths out of the 8,423 cases reported as of the end of February, according to data received by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Experts from the WHO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Medecins sans Frontieres have joined teams sent by the

Nigerian Ministry of Health to the affected areas in support of control activities. Samples are being investigated in laboratories in Nigeria and Norway.

The WHO Representative in Nigeria has commended the efforts made by the Federal Ministry of Health for its handling of the outbreak. Seven million doses of vaccines have been distributed to the affected areas. However, the WHO feels that an additional 10 million doses will be needed in the foreseeable future in order to ensure coverage of children under the age of 15, the population group at highest risk.

WHO experts have noted the shortage of drugs, particularly chloramphenicol, the most suitable drug to treat meningitis patients. The Nigerian Government has asked the WHO to help procure 50,000 vials of oily chloramphenicol, which is more convenient for use by health workers than the powder form, as well as 50,000 syringes and needles. The WHO is working closely in the field with local health authorities, UNICEF and Medecins sans Frontieres. The WHO has recommended that a task force/coordination committee be formed to improve information and intensify public education.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information · Central News Section · New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/2098
11 March 1996

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General says only global approach will stop terrorism; to attend anti-terrorism summit in Egypt.

* United Nations to launch System-wide Special Initiative on Africa this week.

* After 18-hour delay, full UNSCOM team begins inspection of building in Baghdad.

* Negotiations begin on legally binding agreement to control international trade of hazardous chemicals and pesticides.

* Budget of $6.1 million for International Tribunal for Law of the Sea approved.

* Special Adviser Kittani in Tehran meets with leadership of United Tajik opposition.

* UN Observer killed in Georgia as vehicle hits mine.

* In former Yugoslavia, reports from Sarajevo of further deterioration of law and order in suburbs.

* ESCAP Human Resources Development Award won by non-formal training institute in India.

* Most Rwandan children witnessed violence and killing during 1994 genocide, UNICEF survey finds.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has said only a global approach would stop terrorism in its tracks. The comments came as he was preparing to leave New York tonight to attend the summit

conference in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt which has been called to confront the acts of violence which threaten the Middle East peace process.

The Secretary-General was invited to Wednesday's summit by President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and President Bill Clinton of the United States of America, to join other world leaders involved in the peace process. A United Nations spokesman said the Secretary-General "feels it is very important that world leaders get together and act because terrorism has a global dimension and only a global approach would stop it in its tracks."

From Egypt Mr. Boutros-Ghali goes on to Geneva for meetings with the team working on the comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty. Later, he will embark on his trip to the Far-East.

* * *

The United Nations is launching a System-wide Special Initiative on Africa this week. Friday's launching of the 10-year, multi-billion dollar programme of concrete actions is aimed at providing renewed impetus to Africa's development. It will include participation by the World Bank, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

The Special Initiative is the United Nations system's most significant mobilization of support for the development of a continent's people, as well as its largest coordinated action. Implementation of the Initiative will require up to $25 billion, mostly from the reallocation of existing resources at the national and international levels. The World Bank has agreed to take the lead in mobilizing the bulk of this funding, which will go primarily towards improving basic education and health in Africa. Peace-building, good governance, and water and food security are among the Initiative's other areas of emphasis.

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After having been delayed for eighteen hours, a full inspection team from the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) entered a building in Baghdad to conduct a planned inspection. This followed unanimous actions by the Security Council, which, through its President, stated that Iraq's refusal to admit entrance into the building constituted a violation of Security Council resolutions.

The site had been secured by the Commission inspectors throughout the period of Iraq's refusal to grant immediate access, according to UNSCOM. The Commission had reason to believe that material related

to banned weapons were at the site. The full inspection of site, including document and computer searches is continuing peacefully with 28 personnel involved under the direction of the Chief Inspector of the team.

* * *

In Brussels, negotiations have begun on a legally binding agreement that will control the international trade of hazardous chemicals and pesticides. The negotiations on a legally binding instrument will complement steps already taken by a few countries to enact laws requiring their own export industries to comply with the decisions of importing countries. The main purpose of the future agreement is to help countries move towards more effective chemicals management and help phase out the use of the most hazardous compounds. Training and capacity-building will therefore be an important part of the negotiations. Initial efforts by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to promote chemical safety were voluntary. However, as some pesticides and other chemicals that are banned or severely restricted in certain developed countries are still widely used elsewhere, particularly in developing countries, the governing bodies of the FAO and UNEP introduced the voluntary "prior informed consent" procedure in 1989.

* * *

The Meeting of States Parties of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea has approved a budget of $6.1 million for the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and its administrative organ - the Registry. The money is for an initial period covering 1 August 1996 to 31 December 1997. The budget for the initial period will be financed by all States parties to the Convention as of 1 August. Contributions by States parties will be based upon the scale of assessments for the regular budget of the United Nations.

* * *

The Secretary-General's Special Adviser Ismat Kittani was in Tehran over the weekend, meeting with the leadership of the United Tajik opposition. The opposition has agreed to extend the existing cease-fire agreement unconditionally for three months, according to a United Nations Spokesman. However, the opposition declined to accept the Government's invitation to attend the special session of the Tajik Parliament which has been scheduled for today. Mr. Kittani is currently in Dushanbe, where he addressed the parliament's special session this morning. He informed it of the opposition's agreement to extend the cease-fire saying, given a similar statement made

earlier by the President of Tajikistan, he considers that the extension of the cease-fire had now been agreed by both sides.

* * *

In Georgia, a member of the United Nations Observer Mission was killed when his vehicle hit a mine on Saturday. The peacekeeper from Bangladesh was killed instantly by the explosion, according to a Spokesman for the Organization. Two others - a Hungarian military observer and an interpreter were also injured, but their injuries are not considered life-threatening.

* * *

In the former Yugoslavia, there are reports from Sarajevo that law and order have further deteriorated in the suburbs of Ilidca and Grbavica over the weekend. The vacuum of authority created by the rapid departure of Serb police authorities without the existence of effective federation control has resulted in lawlessness characterized by robberies, arson, intimidation and in a couple of cases, murder, a UN Spokesman said today.

The two suburbs have no police force to maintain law and order. Most of the Serb police officers have already been evacuated and the few remaining are unwilling or incapable of discharging police functions. The residents who remain there have no fire protection since all the fire-fighting equipment have been withdrawn, she said. The consequent condition of terror is forcing the few Serbs who might want to remain to join the exodus.

The heads of the Implementation Force (IFOR) contingent and the International Police Task Force (IPTF) met with about a hundred, mostly elderly Ilidza residents Saturday trying to allay their fears and persuade them to stay.

* * *

The 1995 UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Human Resources Development Award has been won by the Social Work and Research Centre, a non-formal training institute in Rajasthan, India. The Centre caters to "unemployable" young men and women who have been rejected by the formal education system, according to the United Nations Information Service (UNIS).

The Centre, known as Barefoot College, was founded in 1972 based on the belief that village youth can be trained by their peers in a variety of higher skills that do not require degrees. Two generations of teachers, doctors and engineers have passed through the College and

are now engaged in providing basic services to support their communities.

The 1995 Award is being sponsored by the Government of Japan. The winner will receive a cash prize of $20,000, which will be presented to the Director of the Centre, Bunker Roy, in April at the United Nations Centre in Bangkok during the fifty-second session of ESCAP.

* * *

Ninety-five percent of Rwandan children witnessed violence and killing during the genocide of 1994, according to a survey conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which notes that children were subjected to "unprecedented levels of exposure to traumatic events."

The report highlights the findings of a national baseline trauma survey carried out in 1995 by UNICEF's Trauma Recovery Programme based in Rwanda's capital, Kigali. Over 3,000 children, aged between eight and nineteen years were interviewed. The Report notes that more than one-third of children interviewed had seen children taking part in killings, 31 per cent had witnessed rapes, nearly 80 per cent had lost immediate family members during the war and more than one-third of them had witnessed the murder of family members. Almost all of the children believed they would die during the fighting.

The UNICEF survey report concludes that there is no baseline in modern history that enables one to compare adequately the magnitude of traumatic events that these children have personally witnessed during the genocide.

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Please Note: The first headline in Friday's Highlights should have read as follows:

Security Council asks Secretary-General to maintain United Nations Office in Rwanda headed by his Special Representative.

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information · Central News Section · New York

UNITED NATIONS

Prepared by Central News

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12 March 1996

T U E S D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

* There is need for a streamlined, more coherent and responsive Secretariat, Secretary-General tells Working Group on Strengthening UN System.

* Secretary-General in Egypt to attend anti-terrorism summit, meets with Egyptian President.

* Commission on Status of Women begins follow-up to 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women.

* Secretary-General recommends extension of UN Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP) mandate for three months.

* Robberies, looting and intimidation of Serb civilians by armed individuals and groups continue in Sarajevo suburbs.

* Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs says Study on Emergency Assistance to Rwanda on target.

* Second WFP food shipment leaves for Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

* UNDP Arab-State Resident Representatives set new priorities.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has said there is a need for a streamlined, more coherent and responsive Secretariat. In a statement to the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System, the Secretary-General said there is also a need for an Organization in which all principal organs function in the balance and harmony envisioned by the Charter.

The Secretariat of the future must be comprised of a core international civil service - which constituted the independent heart of the Organization and provided experience and continuity, the Secretary-General said. "We can create a United Nations that is truly universal in its outlook, and more participatory in its methods. A United Nations with a clear mission and a well defined scope. An organization whose operations are streamlined and efficient. An organization whose approach is coherent, and whose activities are well coordinated."

According to the Secretary-General, the process of globalization was accelerating. At the same time, the forces of fragmentation were intensifying. he said these phenomena, and the new opportunities and new global problems they were creating, made the need for an effective United Nations greater than ever.

Dr. Boutros-Ghali said the United Nations agenda - containing conflicts, redressing inequalities, combatting poverty - was crucial. The United Nations would be increasingly important in addressing this agenda. But change was needed because it had been learnt that: "we must be clear about our priorities; we must shape our missions to our means; we must not spread ourselves too thin; and we must act not only on the symptoms, but also on the root causes of problems."

* * *

Following his arrival in Egypt to attend the anti-terrorism summit, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali had a meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, according to a UN Spokesman. They talked about the importance of the summit of peacemakers, not only because it would help contain and confront terrorism on regional and international levels, but also because of the support and impetus it would give to the Middle East peace process.

In a statement in Cairo, the Secretary-General said the United Nations was ready to take the required measures to erect a framework to fight against international terrorism. He said the UN was a tool which member countries should put to work.

* * *

Efforts should continue to carry on the work of the Beijing Conference, so that women and men would address the next millennium's problems on the basis of equality, according to the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on gender issues, Rosario Green. In a statement to the Commission on the Status of Women which is meeting over the next two weeks on the follow-up to the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, Assistant Secretary-General Green said that while women had come a long way, they still had some distance to cover before all their goals were attained. As such, she added, the struggle at the national level should continue to ensure that governments kept their promises with regard to women.

Ensuring that women did participate in decision-making must clearly be one of the tasks of the organizations of civil society, she added. As democratization was known for political change, the votes of women were instruments for their own advancement and for the betterment of society.

The cash crunch faced by the United Nations would cause it to curtail services affecting the work of the Commission, Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development said. He called on the international community to ensure that the work concerning the advancement of women would be disrupted as little as possible.

The most important dimension of the Beijing Conference was the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all the activities of the United Nations. This activity of mainstreaming was the key dimension of the interface between the work that has been done, not just in Beijing, but all of the work that has been done in the UN system on the status of women and the rest of the work of the UN on developmental issues, Mr. Desai said. By placing gender concerns squarely in the centre of policy debate and operational programmes, the Beijing Conference had stated firmly and equivocally that the world was not divided between a women's part and the rest, which would by implication be a man's part, but rather was one in which the interest of both men and women could be reflected and their distinct contributions recognized and mobilized, he added.

"Although the problems that continue to beset women manifest themselves as social issues, the root causes and the solutions lie as much in the economic area",

said the Acting Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) Martha Duenas-Loaza. She said issues related to the advancement of women called for a holistic approach.

On behalf of the "Group of 77" developing countries, the representative of Costa Rica said the most important factor in the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action was the mobilization of new and additional resources to face the problem of poverty.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended an extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP), for another three months. In a report to the Security Council, the Secretary-General said the peninsula remained tense but stable. But, it was an area of potential military confrontation between the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, according to a UN Spokesman.

The negotiation process had accelerated over the past few months and both sides agreed that the presence of international observers contributed to the decrease of tension and to a more positive atmosphere for negotiations, the Secretary-General said. However, the two sides did not agree on which organization should be observing and monitoring. So in the absence of further progress on a negotiated resolution of their differences, and in the absence of agreement on an alternative organization to monitor the area, the Secretary-General considered that the continued presence of UNMOP would contribute to the decrease of tension.

There are 28 military observers from 27 countries in the Prevlaka peninsula. In mid-January, the Security Council had authorized UN military observers to continue monitoring the demilitarization of the Prevlaka peninsula for three months and said that it could be extended for an additional period of three months if necessary.

* * *

In the former Yugoslavia, field reports say robberies, looting and intimidation of Serb civilians by armed individuals and groups continue in Ilidza and Grbavica, a UN Spokesman said today. Several dozen cases of arson were also reported Monday.

In response both the International Police Task Force (IPTF)and the Implementation Force (IFOR) increased patrols before the transfer of authority to Federation police in Ilidza today. Before departing, the Serb police in Ilidza attempted several times to set fires to their own police station, but both IPTF and IFOR prevented that from happening. They have now secured the building.

Reports from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) say that only about 2,000 ethnic Serbs are left in Ilidza out of an estimated population of about 20,000.

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The most obvious lesson emerging from Rwanda is that prevention is the most compassionate and sane response if the international community is serious about helping communities besieged by crisis, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Yasushi Akashi, said today. He was addressing a meeting on the Multi-Donor Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, on behalf of the executive heads of humanitarian agencies.

Mr. Akashi said that none would disagree with the study's central thesis concerning the enormity of what happened in Rwanda and the profound implications of genocide. The loss of life due to avoidable circumstances compounds the tragedy. He noted that the study's analysis of constraints, lost opportunities, and recommendations was a valuable contribution to the continuing effort to address shortcomings in international response mechanisms.

Another important lesson from Rwanda was that humanitarian assistance could not substitute for political will, Mr. Akashi said. Relief in a vacuum is tantamount to managing only the symptoms of a crisis.

He said that the study's findings and recommendations would be studied closely by individual agencies of the United Nations system. Extensive reforms were already under way, he added.

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The World Food Programme's (WFP) second shipment of rice for flood victims in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has left Bangkok for the port of Nampo, according to the WFP.

The WFP, the United Nations food aid arm, says that a WFP-chartered freighter is carrying 5,635 tons of rice, from Thailand and 903 tons of rice that the Programme is shipping to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for Caritas.

The shipment is the second WFP consignment of rice to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea since the country suffered widespread flooding last summer. The WFP delivered an initial shipment of 5,140 tons in November last year and expects to deliver the third shipment by mid-April.

* * *

Eighteen United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Arab-State Resident Representatives have wrapped up three days of meetings in Djibouti with a new set of priorities for the region and the beginnings of a strategy for achieving goals, according to UNDP. The priorities the group identified include new or strengthened programmes to improve governance, diversify economies, increase women's role in development, ensure sustainable supplies of food and water, and protect the environment.

UNDP Administrator James Gustave Speth said his visits to a number of Arab countries had helped him identify seven priorities for the region: assistance in improving governance and aiding political transition; helping countries through economic transitions, including shifts from oil-dependent economies to diversified ones and shifts from systems dominated by the public sector to ones driven by the private sector; preventing crises, integrating societies and resolving conflict; eradicating poverty; advancing the status of women; protecting the environment; and boosting the economies and development cooperation within the region.

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Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information · Central News Section · New York

UNITED NATIONS

Prepared by Central News

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13 March 1996

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General says United Nations awaiting instructions of international community to serve as mechanism for mobilization against terrorism on global scale.

* UN to participate in Group to prepare recommendations on implementing Summit decisions.

* Sudan has not yet complied with Security Council demand to extradite suspects of assassination attempt on Egyptian President - Secretary-General reports to Security Council.

* Security Council regrets death of UNOMIG Peacekeeper in Georgia.

* Political and security situation in Somalia has not improved, Special Adviser Gharekhan tells Security Council.

* In former Yugoslavia, reports of looting, intimidation and robbery of Serb homes continue.

* ESCAP calls for rediscovery of cities as places where people live, work and anchor their lives.

* UN University co-sponsors Conference on Fate of democracy in era of globalization.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has said that the United Nations is the forum where a foundation for global action is being built, and, it is awaiting the instructions of the international community to serve as a mechanism for mobilization on a global scale against terrorism. In a statement to the Summit of Peacemakers in Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt Wednesday, the Secretary-General noted that at last year's Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly, Heads of State and Government agreed to act together against terrorism. Now, he said, "the task is to take this normative foundation as our platform for rapid and decisive action".

The Secretary-General said "no people, no part of the world any longer can feel beyond the reach of terror or terrorism". He noted that terror and terrorism have become a global phenomenon because terrorists receive arms and funds from abroad; receive instructions from abroad and take refuge abroad after committing their crime. At the same time, he said, the globalization of terrorism is sustained because countries may use terrorists to advance their aims; "because the media give

terrorists the publicity they seek; and because unilateral and even bilateral action is not enough to deal with a threat that is global".

* * *

The United Nations will fully participate in the working group set up in the prepare recommendations on implementing the decisions of the Summit of Peacemakers. A UN Spokesman said today that the Organization will put at the disposal of the participants in the group all documents and material available to it and to its specialized agencies on the question of eliminating terrorism.

Meanwhile, in a Declaration at the end of the Summit, the participants expressed their full support for the Middle East peace process and their determination that this process continue in order to accomplish a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the region. They also decided to support the Israel-Palestinian agreements, the continuation of the negotiating process, and to politically and economically reinforce it, and enhance the security situation for both, with special attention to the current and pressing economic needs of the Palestinians.

The Summit was co-chaired by President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and President Bill Clinton of the United States of America and attended by a total of 27 Kings, Heads of State and Government, Crown Princes, foreign ministers and special envoys as well as Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali

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The Government of Sudan has not yet complied with the demand of the Security Council to extradite to Ethiopia the three suspects wanted in connection with the assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, according to the Secretary-General. In a report, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali said the Sudanese Government maintains that the Ethiopian Government has not provided it with adequate information on which to base its search for the suspects.

The Special Adviser to the Secretary-General Mr. Chinmaya Gharekhan visited the countries neighbouring the Sudan. A UN Spokesman said all the neighbouring countries visited by Mr. Gharekhan have accused the Sudan of supporting terrorist activities within their territory. The Secretary-General will continue to keep in contact with all parties concerned as well as with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on this issue.

* * *

Members of the Security Council have expressed regret at the death of a member of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), Lieutenant-Colonel Mohammed Hussain of Bangladesh. Council President Legwaila Joseph Legwaila of Botswana said in a statement to the media, "Members of the Security Council wish to extend their condolences to the Government of Bangladesh and the family of Colonel Hussain."

The incident occurred on Saturday, in the Abkhazia region of Georgia when Colonel Hussain's vehicle ran over an anti-tank mine. About 130 UN Observers are currently stationed in UNOMIG.

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The Security Council was briefed on Wednesday by Special Adviser Chinmaya Gharekhan on the political and security situation in Somalia. The political and security situation in Somalia has not improved and the humanitarian situation is

getting worse. A UN Spokesman said there was evidence that malnutrition and disease were once again emerging in areas which had shown significant improvement and the agencies were faced with a dilemma. Insecurity had increased the logistical difficulties and made delivery of assistance more expensive. They were having to resort more and more to airlifts to get assistance into some areas. At the same time, funding was drying up because donors appeared to be fed up with funding operations in Somalia, she said.

* * *

In the former Yugoslavia, there are reports of the entry of federation police into Ilidza Tuesday accompanied by hundreds of Bosnians from Sarajevo and Karsen, according to a UN Spokesman. These are reported to be young thugs, many of whom looted and robbed Serb homes and resorted to intimidation of the few Serbs who remain in Ilidza. Field reports say despite the reinforced presence of the Implementation Force (IFOR), and the International Police Task Force (IPTF), intimidation, looting and harassment continued all Tuesday resulting in the UN International Police Task Force receiving a complaint every five minutes, the spokesman said.

The situation in Grbavica, the last Serb suburb scheduled for take over remains tense due to armed Serbs roaming the area, robbing, looting and harassing. Nine buildings, including a school were burnt yesterday, the spokesman continued. There are round-the-clock patrols of both IPTF and IFOR which has somewhat alleviated the situation. However, there is no Serb police remaining.

* * *

There is a need for the rediscovery of cities as places where people live, work and anchor their lives, and not only as "economic engines or physical monuments to wealth and development, according to the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). In an opening statement to the second Asia-Pacific Urban Forum in Bangkok, Ms. Seiko Takahashi said the region was confronted by a metamorphosis rarely seen in human history.

Ms. Takahashi drew attention to the anticipated urban transition by the year 2020, when the population of the Asia-Pacific region is expected to become predominantly urban, against a backdrop of rapid economic growth, the fastest, most massive urban population growth in history, and increasingly severe environmental impacts. The focus of discussions is a paper entitled "Living in Asian Cities: The impending crises".

* * *

The United Nations University is co-sponsoring a Conference on The Fate of Democracy in the Era of Globalization at Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts. The 2-day event, beginning Thursday, will provide an opportunity for practitioners and academics to meet and explore the prospects for democracy in a period of increasing globalization.

The Conference seeks to address a number of issues including, how we must think about democracy in a globalizing era; the prospects for democracy at the level of the nation-state in the years ahead; the potential for democracy in international organizations; and what roles can and should the United Nations play in democratization.

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Daily Highlights

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UNITED NATIONS

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DH/2101
14 March 1996

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa to be launched Friday at ceremonies throughout Africa, Europe and UN Headquarters in New York.

* Secretary-General expresses deep concern over funding provision in draft resolutions on MICIVIH and MINUGUA before the General Assembly.

* Poverty and its special implications for women are focus of discussions as Commission on Status of Women continues 40th session.

* Secretary-General encouraged by first round of elections in Sierra Leone; expresses concern at reports of armed attacks against civilians.

* Secretary-General appoints Thomas Hammarberg of Sweden as Special Representative for Human Rights in Cambodia.

* Disarmament Commission to discuss arms transfers in 1996 session in April.

* UNHCR and UNICEF to promote coordinated responses in areas of joint concern.

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The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa is to be launched Friday at ceremonies throughout Africa, Europe and United Nations Headquarters in New York. The unprecedented Special Initiative is described as a $25 billion programme of concrete actions to accelerate African development. It aims over a 10-year period, to greatly expand basic education and health care, promote peace and better governance, and improve water and food security. It also involves a year-long mobilization of political commitment and support for Africa.

The multi-billion dollar decade-long initiative represents about 20 per cent of the current level of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), according to Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Assistant Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Speaking to correspondents on the eve of the launching of the initiative, she said it was not expected that the funding would new money. ODA was on the decline, competition for resources was intense and it would to be difficult to pool large sums in additional resources for Africa. What was expected was within existing levels of aid, there will be reallocation to these particular activities, not only on the part of Africa itself, but on the part of multilateral institutions.

The Initiative will be launched during a ceremony at UN Headquarters. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali is expected to address the ceremony via a live satellite link from Geneva and joined by World Bank President Wohlfensen from Washington, D.C.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has expressed deep concern over two draft resolutions before the General Assembly. One relates to the International Civilian Mission to Haiti (MICIVIH) and the other to the UN Mission for the Verification of Human Rights in Guatemala (MINUGUA). They ask the Secretary-General to fund the extended mandates of MICIVIH and MINUGUA within existing resources. A UN Spokesman said today that the Secretary-General's concern is contained in a letter to the President of the General Assembly.

This is coming at a time when the Secretary-General is still scrambling to identify ways to make the reductions necessary to bring expenditures down to $1.3 billion a year as approved by the General Assembly in the last budget, the Spokesman said. She pointed out that it was a zero growth budget and has meant significant reductions in staff and other costs and it was not easy to meet those. In his letter the Secretary-General referred to these budget reductions and said, these gave him almost no flexibility at all. He said he was worried that he would only be able to implement the additional mandate if the General Assembly decided which existing programmes he should curtail, postpone or terminate.

Both missions - MICIVIH and MINUGUA, were operations that went to the heart of the purposes for which the United Nations was created, the Dr. Boutros-Ghali said. The human rights missions whose futures were at stake had been established to help bring to an end long standing conflicts and create conditions for a lasting peace for the peoples of the countries concerned. He said these missions responded to the wish of Member States that the highest priority be given to preventive and peacemaking activities which were less costly remedies than peacekeeping operations.

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Poverty and its special implications for women were the focus of discussions as the Commission on the Status of Women continued its 40th session. A panel of experts from governments, the World Bank and women's grass-roots organizations examined a wide range of issues, including the way gender inequities hampered economic development and the role of non-governmental organizations in channelling aid directly to poor women. They also stressed the vital importance of equal access to credit.

The Commission, which monitors implementation of the recommendations of the 4th World Conference on Women is holding discussions examining poverty, women and the media, and child and dependent care including sharing of responsibilities between men and women This experimental approach is aimed at allowing governments, United Nations bodies, non-governmental organizations and the media discuss practical implementation issues. At the end of its two-week session, the Commission is expected to approve "agreed conclusions" which will have the same strength as a resolution.

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The Secretary-General has sent a message to the Chairman of the National Provisional Ruling Council in Sierra Leone Brigadier-General Julius Bio. Noting that he was encouraged by the first round of elections that took place on 26 and 27 February, Dr. Boutros-Ghali said he was also pleased to note that the second round of presidential elections would take place on 15 March as scheduled. As none of the

candidates received 55 per cent of the votes required to be elected there will be a run-off election, a UN Spokesman said.

Dr. Boutros-Ghali however, was concerned by reports of continued armed attacks against innocent civilians. He appealed to the Chairman and to his administration to take all necessary measures to ensure the protection of the civilian population from intimidation and attacks by elements hostile to the democratic process so that the electoral process could be completed in a free and fair manner.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has decided to appoint Ambassador Thomas Hammarberg of Sweden as Special Representative for Human Rights in Cambodia. Ambassador Hammarberg has in-depth experience in the fields of human rights and development as well as first-hand experience of human rights issues in Southeast Asia. He is currently Ambassador and Special Adviser to the Swedish Government on Humanitarian Issues. He succeeds Justice Michael Kirby, who has been appointed to the Australian High Court.

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The Disarmament Commission is to hold its 1996 session for two weeks from 22 April. An organization meeting of the Commission has finalized three specific items for the provisional agenda of the session - international arms transfers, with particular reference to General Assembly resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991. That resolution called upon States to accord high priority to eradicating illicit trade in weapons and military equipment, which it defines as that trade which evades the control of national or international authorities. The other two issues to be discussed will be the proposed fourth special session of the General Assembly on Disarmament and nuclear issues.

The Commission is a deliberative body with universal membership and was mandated by the Assembly to make recommendations on disarmament issues.

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The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) will promote coordinated responses in areas of joint concern. Under a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at further strengthening coordination, the two Agencies defined the beneficiary populations covered by them as refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons and affected local populations.

The Memorandum signed by the UNHCR Sadako Ogata and UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy, also covers advocacy, promotion and strategy-formulation roles, particularly with regard to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as operational and integration and rehabilitation activities.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information · Central News Section · New York

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DH/2102
15 March 1996

F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

* United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa officially launched by Secretary-General.

* Security Council meets on situation in Somalia.

* Solidarity is critical in combatting poverty, Commission on Status of Women is told.

* UNHCR closes office in Santiago, Chile,

* High Representative in Bosnia-Herzegovina expresses concern over the political will of Bosnian parties to comply with Dayton Peace Agreements.

* In Angola, Special Representative opens two more quartering sites.

* State of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the world will be focus as Commission on Human Rights begins 52nd session in Geneva Monday.

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The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa was officially launched today by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali at a ceremony at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Speaking via live satellite hookup from Geneva, he said this initiative was first and foremost an appeal to the global community to join in an effort intended to benefit many millions of people in Africa.

The Secretary-General said the initiative is a message to Africa that it is not alone and has not been abandoned by the international community. For several years, Africa despite its serious and persistent difficulties has fought courageously for peace, development, democracy and for respect of human rights. More than ever, Dr. Boutros-Ghali said he believed in the ability of the men and women in Africa to act.

The unprecedented Special Initiative is described as a $25 billion programme of concrete actions to accelerate African development. It aims over a 10-year period, to greatly expand basic education and health care, promote peace and better governance, and improve water and food security. It also involves a year-long mobilization of political commitment and support for Africa.

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For information media - not an official record

(more)

The Security Council met today in an open meeting on the situation in Somalia. In a statement on behalf of the European Union, the Deputy permanent Representative of Italy Ambassador Lorenzo Ferrarin said Somalia was today a country without a semblance of central authority. It was the people and leaders of Somalia who bear the ultimate responsibility for national reconciliation and restoring peace, he said. The situation seemed particularly critical in the capital, where the increase in criminal activity was compounded by the continued closure of the port and airport, leading to a blockade of commercial activity. The situation was hardly reassuring, and security conditions are getting worse. There were signs of a possible extension of armed bands' activity and of widescale renewal of fighting. Ambassador Ferrarin said the European Union was deeply concerned by the spiral of seemingly endless violence gripping Somalia.

The representative of the United States Ambassador Madeleine Albright said that while economic activity was moving forward in Somalia, this private economic activity did little to support social services. She added that the United States had joined in efforts of the United Nations in addressing the humanitarian, social and economic concerns of the people of Somalia.

She said while her country did not recognize or support any Somali group or faction, it remained in communication with all the political groups of the country. The US and the international aid community were closely monitoring the food situation in order to prevent another famine. She called upon the factions in Somalia to re-open the port and insure that it remained open so that assistance may be delivered.

* * *

The Commission on the Status of Women has been told that solidarity is critical in combatting poverty. Speakers pointed to solidarity between North and South, governments and civil society, rich and poor, and men and women as the Commission conducted a dialogue among governments on poverty, as part of its follow-up to the Platform for Action adopted at the Beijing Conference on Women.

The representative of the Republic of Korea stressed that international financial organizations must cooperate with developing countries in order to address poverty in the least developed countries. The envoy from Chile said the struggle against poverty is not a matter to be dealt with by governments alone, rather all of mankind must participate.

Speaking on behalf of the European Union, Italian representative said that in some developed countries, poverty, especially among women, is linked to labor shortages. He said the European Union is working to address the problem of unemployment based on equal opportunities for men and women. He cautioned that the eradication of poverty is central to the functioning of genuine democracy, since poverty prevented people from exercising their rights.

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The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), has closed its office in Santiago, Chile, after 22 years of service to refugees and returnees in Chile, according to a UNHCR statement.

The office began work in 1973, a week after the overthrow of the government of Salvador Allende. During 1973 and 1974, UNHCR Santiago managed to find resettlement for over 2,000 foreign refugees who were among the first to suffer the consequences of repression. Simultaneously, UNHCR offices in neighboring countries had to cope with the influx of thousands of Chileans escaping military repression.

* * *

The High Representative in Bosnia-Herzegovina has expressed concern over the political will of the Bosnian parties to comply with the Dayton Peace Agreements. The charge is contained in the first report by High Representative Carl Bildt to the Security Council in accordance with the peace agreement, according to a UN Spokesman. The report which covers the period from the signing of the agreement last December to the beginning of March this year, indicates that the separation of forces has been carried out successfully with the help of the Implementation Force (IFOR).

However, Mr. Bildt said in the report that political developments surrounding the transfer of territory has been troubling. Three months after the peace agreement was signed, the forces of ethnic separation are still far stronger than the forces of ethnic reintegration. The spokesman said Mr. Bildt was very worried about the lack of adequate funding for various civilian implementation efforts and was concerned about the political will of the parties concerned to fully comply.

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In Angola, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General Blandon Beye has opened two more quartering sites. According to a UN Radio report from Luanda, there are very few soldiers from the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), being quartered this week. The slowdown is due to the fact that UNITA is this week celebrating its 30th anniversary. So far only just over 17-thousand UNITA soldiers have been quartered.

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The state of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the world will be the focus of the Commission on Human Rights when it opens its fifty-second session in Geneva Monday. The provisional agenda for the session deals with questions such as human rights violations in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine, and on the Papua New Guinea island of Bouganville. There are also items on the human rights situation in Cuba, southern Lebanon and Western Bekaa, Iran, Zaire, Equatorial Guinea, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, the territory of the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and East Timor.

The Commission will look at the realization in all countries of economic, social and cultural rights, of the right to development and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Commission's extensive mandate allows it to examine the whole spectrum of human rights, be they civil, political, economic, social or cultural.

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Daily Highlights

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UNITED NATIONS

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18 March 1996

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General says human rights violations must be denounced on a case-by-case basis wherever they occur.

* Third round of oil-for-food talks with Iraq to begin in New York next month.

* Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination concludes 48th session examining measures by some countries to combat discrimination.

* UNICEF says it will continue concentrating on four areas of pressing need in Africa.

* Secretary-General expresses satisfaction at successful completion of electoral process in Sierra Leone.

* In former Yugoslavia, there are reports of continued arson in Grbavica on the eve of its transfer to Federation control.

* Japan announces voluntary contribution of $3.5 million for UNRWA projects.

* There is need for government leadership to counter the stereotyping of women, Commission on the Status of Women is told.

* International Court of Justice issues order on case between Cameroon and Nigeria.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has called for the creation of a true human rights diplomacy. In a statement to the opening of the 52nd session of the Human Rights Commission, the Secretary-General said that in defending human rights, violations must be denounced on a case-by-case basis wherever they occur. He said this human rights diplomacy appears clearly, today, in the mandate entrusted in recent years to the peacekeeping forces.

Dr. Boutros-Ghali pointed to most of the major operations, specifically those conducted in El Salvador, Mozambique or in Cambodia, noting that they included protection of human rights and of the population in the mission of the "Blue Helmets". Thus, the Secretary-General added, the link between peace and human

rights is clearly established by the facts, as the rights of the human person will be guaranteed first and foremost by restoring peace. He said this diplomacy is also evident in the international action of the United Nations in favour of development.

The Human Rights Commission today began its fifty-second session, scheduled for six weeks, at Geneva. The state of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the world is the focus of the session and the provisional agenda deals with questions such as human rights violations in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine, on the Papua New Guinea Island of Bougainvillea, in Cuba, southern Lebanon and western Bekaa, Iran, Zaire, Equatorial Guinea, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, the territory of the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, East Timor, and Cyprus.

The Commission's mandate allows it to examine the whole spectrum of human rights, be they civil, political, economic, social or cultural. This year, the Commission will again deal with the issues of racial and religious discrimination.

The Commission was established in 1946 by the Economic and Social Council. It has been authorized, since 1990, to meet exceptionally between regular sessions to consider particularly grave human rights situations, provided that a majority of its 53 members so agree.

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Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali has been in contact with Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz and has decided that a third round of oil-for-food talks will begin in New York on 8 April, it was announced today in Geneva. The Spokeswoman for the Secretary-General in Europe, Therese Gastaut said the Secretary-General was very concerned by the suffering of the Iraqi population. The Secretary-General attached very great importance to the application of Security Council resolution 986 which would allow a controlled resumption of Iraqi oil sales for humanitarian purposes.

The UN Security Council imposed sanctions on Iraq following the expulsion of Iraqi forces from Kuwait in 1990.

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The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has wound up its 48th session during which it examined measures taken by a number of countries to combat discrimination. During its 3-week session, the Committee also studied information about the implementation of the Convention in States whose regular reports are overdue, and looked at countries listed under its early warning and urgent procedures mechanism. Within the framework of that mechanism, the Committee established a working group to contribute to a future constitutional conference in Rwanda, which would be a step towards establishing a lasting peace in that country. Concerning Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Committee decided to institute a process of consultation with that Government to determine how its good offices could be drawn upon in efforts to promote understanding between races and ethnic groups there.

The Russian Federation was taken off the list of countries under the early warning and urgent procedures mechanism, as the situation there was examined during this session through the regular reporting process. Mexico and Algeria were also taken off the list.

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The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), says its contribution to the UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa will be concentrated in four areas of pressing need. Executive Director Carol Bellamy says UNICEF will continue to work to revitalize health systems that are community-based and provide universal access to primary health care.

UNICEF will also help to ensure that all children -particularly girls- have access to higher quality basic education, and that parents and communities become more involved in their children's education. Thirdly, Ms. Bellamy said UNICEF will continue to extend access to safe water supply, adequate sanitation and hygiene, through low-cost, community-run systems and fourth, the Agency will promote conflict prevention, protection and rehabilitation for the 20 million African children caught in war or living in post-conflict situations.

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The Interim National Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone has announced the results of the second round of presidential elections held last Friday, according to UN Spokesman Sylvanna Foa. The Secretary-General has noted with satisfaction that the electoral process in Sierra Leone has been completed successfully and he sends his congratulations to President-elect Ahmad Tejan Kabbah on his election, she said. Mr. Kabbah won nearly 60 per cent of the votes.

The Secretary-General also congratulated the people and the political parties of Sierra Leone for the dignity, maturity and determination with which they exercised their democratic rights in the midst of difficult circumstances. He commended the National Provisional Ruling Council and its Chairman Brigadier-General Julius Bio for their commitment to the processes of democratization and peace, she said.

* * *

In the former Yugoslavia, Grbavica is to be transferred to Bosnian Federation control Tuesday. There are reports that at least half a dozen houses were on fire in Grbavica, according to a UN Spokesman. On Saturday, 25 fires were set and three cases of rape were reported. The Federation fire brigade was escorted in by the Implementation Force (IFOR), to extinguish some of the fires. UN Spokesman Sylvanna Foa says however, after some grenades were thrown in the direction of both IFOR and International Police Task Force (IPTF) vehicles, the fire brigades stopped coming. On Sunday, IFOR arrested 12 arsonists and handed them over to the Bosnian Serb police who immediately let them go. Most of the Serb police have already left the area.

There are 91 IPTF police monitors now deployed to oversee the 100 Federation police who are due to come in tomorrow. IFOR has a large presence in the area. There is very little food available and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has begun distributing bread under the protection of IFOR and IPTF. UNHCR has also established a safe house to accommodate those who need a place to stay. A lot of the older people are afraid to stay in their buildings. They are afraid somebody would come and set the building on fire while they're asleep, the spokesman said.

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The Government of Japan has announced a voluntary contribution of US $3.5 million for projects under the Peace Implementation Plan in Lebanon and Jordan run by the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA). The emergency contribution will be used for hospitalization services in Lebanon for 1996/97; the provision of medical supplies in Lebanon; for shelter and repair reconstruction in Jordan and also for the construction and maintenance of pathways and drains in Jordan.

UNRWA Commissioner-General Peter Hansen has called the contribution "another demonstration of Japan's generosity and friendship to the Palestinian people and its strong commitment to the Middle East peace process".

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The Commission on the Status of Women has been told that government leadership is needed to counter the stereotyping of women and violence in the mass media. Several speakers stressed that the best way to encourage a more realistic representation of women's lives was through a dialogue with media owners and voluntary self-regulation by the industry. However, some representatives said that the increasing globalization and competitive nature of the media prevented governments from effectively regulating internationally broadcast programmes.

The Republic of Korea drew attention to rapid technological developments in the media which has led to gender stereotypes being perpetuated on a global scale by a handful of transnational corporations. The comments came as the Commission on the Status of Women was holding a dialogue among governments on women and the media as part of its follow-up to the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

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The International Court of Justice has issued an Order indicating provisional measures in the case concerning land and maritime boundaries between Cameroon and Nigeria.

The Order indicates that both parties should ensure no military action prejudicial to the rights of other; observe the relevant agreement reached; lend every assistance to the proposed United Nations fact-finding mission; and conserve evidence relevant to the present case.

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